

AMENDMENT TO THE TITLE:

Please amend the title as follows:

~~IMAGE READING DEVICE~~ FOR PREVENTING IMAGE QUALITY REDUCTION
CAUSED BY INCIDENTAL LIGHT

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the headings beginning at page 1, line 9, as follows:

~~BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION~~

~~Technical Field of the Invention~~

Please amend the heading beginning at page 4, line 4, as follows:

~~SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION~~

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 5, as follows:

To solve the foregoing problems, an object of ~~the present invention~~ example embodiments is to provide an image reading device which prevents lowering of image reading quality caused by incident external light, without involving increase in production costs ~~nor~~ reduction in original ejecting performance, and without design restrictions.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 11, as follows:

The image reading device of ~~the present invention~~ example embodiments includes:

- an optical reader for reading an original in a main scanning direction;
- a transporter for transporting the original in a sub scanning direction; and
- a guide member for guiding the original read by the optical reader to an original eject slot,

wherein the guide member is provided with a light-blocking portion with its upper surface positioned above an extended plane of a reading surface of the optical reader.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 7, as follows:

FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view showing a configuration of an image reading device according to an example embodiment ~~of the present invention~~;

Please amend the heading beginning at page 5, line 17, as follows:

DESCRIPTION OF ~~THE PREFERRED~~ EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 18, as follows:

A preferred embodiment ~~of the present invention~~ will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings. FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view of a configuration of an image reading device according to an example embodiment ~~of the present invention~~. In the embodiment as shown in FIG. 1, the image reading device is applied to a facsimile machine.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 17, as follows:

The transport path 12B is formed by (i) a lower guide surface 4A and a lower slant surface 4B and (ii) an upper guide surface 5A and an upper slant surface 5B, with the lower and upper surfaces facing each other at a predetermined distance (a distance narrow enough for an original to pass through without being jammed). The transport path 12B slants, generally at an angle approximately equal to that of the reading surface 1A, but partially at a different angle. More specifically, the lower slant surface 4B is formed just downstream from the image sensor 1 in the original transport direction, so as to be at an oblique, upward angle with respect to an extended plane 6 (indicated by a long-dashed short-dashed line) of the reading surface 1A of the image sensor 1. The

lower guide surface 4A is formed downstream from the lower slant surface 4B in the original transport direction. The lower guide surface 4A, and a rear end of the lower slant surface 4B are formed so as to be positioned above the extended plane 6.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 1, as follows:

Subsequently, the original 2 is nipped between the reading surface 1A and the transport roller 3, and has its image read line by line by the image sensor 1 while being transported by the transport roller 3. At this point the lower guide surface 4A in the transport path 12B functions as a light-blocking portion which prevents external light entering through the original eject slot 7 from entering the reading surface 1A directly. This is because the lower guide surface 4A is positioned above the extended plane 6 of the reading surface 1A, as described above.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 6, as follows:

As described above, ~~the present invention~~example embodiments ~~provides~~provide the following advantages.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 12, as follows:

The upper and lower slant surfaces provided between the image reading surface and the light-blocking portion allows smooth transport of an original. As a result, paper ~~jam-jams~~ can be prevented.